

5.0 Comments and Coordination

5.1 Maine Turnpike Authority Study

The Maine Turnpike Gray/New Gloucester Access Study, Final Location Study Report (MTA Study) was completed by the Maine Turnpike Authority in January 1999. During the MTA Study, a Public Advisory Committee (PAC) was established to explore ways to improve access to the Maine Turnpike for these communities and to help alleviate congestion in Gray Village and along portions of Route 26 northwest of Gray Village. There were 15 PAC meetings held during the MTA Study, as well as three public informational meetings. The PAC consisted of residents of Gray, members of the New Gloucester Traffic Committee, members of the Gray Traffic Committee, Selectmen, members from the Greater Portland Council of Governments, and members of the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments.

Three public informational meetings were held over the course of the MTA Study. The first public meeting was held December 11, 1995 and was the public kick-off meeting, outlining the Study Purpose at this meeting, and introducing the members of the PAC. The second public meeting was held April 8 1996, where the Study Goals and Objectives were reviewed, along with the seven alternatives developed to date. The third public meeting was held on October 20, 1997 where the final seven bypass alternatives were presented and public input was sought.

5.2 Gray Transportation Improvement Study

Public participation was initiated at the beginning of the Gray Transportation Improvement Study to incorporate public comments and concerns into the development and analysis of the study needs and alternatives. In addition, a number of other meetings were held with Gray Town officials and the Gray Traffic Committee during the completion of this Environmental Assessment.

A Public Hearing will be held during the public comment period on the Environmental Assessment.

Coordination with regulatory and resource agencies occurred throughout the planning of the Gray Transportation Improvement Study. At the beginning of the study, coordination letters were mailed to various federal, state, regional, and local agencies and special interest groups in accordance with the procedural provisions of NEPA and FHWA's and MDOT's requirements for early coordination. Coordination letters, accompanied by a map of the Study Area, a project description, and a plan of study, were mailed to 28 agencies and special interest groups in January 2001 to notify them of the proposed study, request specific information and encourage participation in the study by identifying areas of initial concern. Table 5-1, page 5-2 lists the agencies and responses received. Copies of responses received are included in this section.

**Table 5-1
Agency Responses**

Agency	Information Requested	Information Received
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Project Notification and Special Concerns	No response received
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Project Notification and Special Concerns	No response received
U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Services	Federally-listed or proposed threatened or endangered species or known critical habitats within the Study Area	No federally-listed species within the Study Area
National Marine Fisheries Services	Notification of any endangered or threatened marine species	No response received
U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration	Project Notification and Special Concerns	No response received
Federal Maine Emergency Management Agency	Floodplain information within the Study Area	No floodplains identified within the Study Area
Federal Aviation Administration	Aviation impacts	No federal aviation impacts
U.S. Coast Guard	Navigable waters impacts	No impacts to navigable waters
U.S. Department of Agriculture	Project Notification and Soils information	Map of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Significance
Atlantic Salmon Commission	Project Notification and Special Concerns	No known salmon spawning areas within the Study Area
Maine Department of Marine Resources	Marine and Anadromous Resources	Response received. No concerns.
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife	Inland and wildlife habitat and species fisheries information	Response received. Resources and potential concerns identified
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife	Rare, threatened and endangered species	Response received. No species except transient bald eagles.
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife	Wildlife information and contacts	Response received. No species except transient bald eagles.
Maine Department of Environmental Protection	Project Notification and special Concerns	No response received
Maine Department of Environmental Protection	Watershed Management Issues	No response received
Maine Department of Environmental Protection	Project Notification and special concerns	No response received
Maine State Planning Office	Project Notification and Demographic Characteristics	Project area data received
Maine Department of Economic and Community Development	Economic Statistics and information	Project area data received
Maine Emergency Management Agency	Project Notification requesting floodplain data	No response received
Maine Department of Human Services	Project Notification and Demographic Information	Data received for the Study Area
Maine Department of Labor	Project Notification and Labor statistics	Data received for the Study Area

Table 5-1 (continued)
Agency Responses

Agency	Information Requested	Information Received
Maine Department of Conservation	Project Notification and Section 4(f) resources and LAWCON resources	Gray snowmobile paths; one LWCF site in the Study Area
Maine Department of Conservation	Snowmobiles and ATV resources	Response received. Locations identified.
Portland Department of Environmental Protection	Natural Resource Data	No response
Maine Historic Preservation Commission	Letter requesting location of resources	Response received. National Register-listed properties identified. No archaeological resources in Study Area.
Maine Department of Conservation	Geologic Resources	Response received. Map provided.
Gray Water District	Potential for Groundwater Contamination	Response received. Reiterated concerns with certain alternatives for Town's water supply.

The Gray Transportation Improvement Study was presented on two occasions to state and federal agencies at the monthly MDOT Interagency meetings.

- In September 2000, an overview of the study was presented at the MDOT Interagency Meeting, which focused on the study history, the summary of the 1999 MTA Study, an overview of the EA scope, and the proposed EA alternatives.
- In February 2002, an overview of the Westerly Bypass Only Alternative was presented at the MDOT Interagency Meeting.